



Organization Trumps Insanity

By Duane Smith, Minidoka County, ID

A most impressive operation is what we found when we toured the Maricopa County recorder's office, which includes the Elections Department.

Helen Purcell used her Team Leaders to break our large group into many small groups to walk through the seven departments that make up her recorder's office. The same adjectives could be used for all of the departments: busy, organized, efficient. But then, if you're handling 8,000 to 10,000 documents on a daily basis, you had better be organized.

It was pointed out that they have available for public viewing, either in the office or on the Internet, over 30 million images dating back to 1991. Records prior to that time are available on microfilm. Digital recordings have been accepted since August of 1999, and they currently are receiving approximately 1,000 documents per day.

Purcell has a staff of 43 in her recorder's office plus 75 more handling her elections' responsibilities. Then, on one of the many days that an election is



Helen Purcell (right), Maricopa County recorder, welcomes the NACRC members for a tour of her extremely well-organized offices.

being run, there may be as many as 7,700 election workers. In the 2003 election cycle, they conducted over 50 elections.

Now I know what keeps Helen so young ... it's the only way she could keep up with all that is going on in her offices.